

# 5 A Day the Preschool Way

## 5 A Day and Circle Time



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## Where Do Fruits and Vegetables Grow?

Use the "Where Do Fruits and Vegetables Grow?" sheet on the next page to introduce children to the different ways that fruits and vegetables grow. Invite children to name what they see in the five pictures on the card: carrots under the ground, lettuce on the ground, zucchini squash on a vine, blueberries on a bush, and papaya on a tree. Encourage children to share their own experiences with these fruits and vegetables or others growing in or under the ground and on vines, bushes, and trees. Discuss what's similar about how all these plants grow. (They all need soil, water, air and sunshine.) Using picture cards or the poster images, talk about where children think other specific fruits and vegetables grow.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> From Celebrate Healthy Eating™series



# Where Do Fruits and Vegetables Grow?

## Carrots

grow  
under the ground.



What other vegetables  
grow under the ground?

## Lettuce

grows  
on the ground.



What other vegetables  
grow on the ground?

## Zucchini

grows  
on a vine.



What other vegetables and  
fruits grow on a vine?

## Blueberries

grow  
on a bush.



What other vegetables and  
fruits grow on a bush?

## Papaya

grows  
on a tree.



What other fruits grow on  
a tree?

# 5 A Day the Preschool Way



## What's Inside?

All fruits and vegetables grow from seeds

This activity is recommended for ages 3 and up.

Use the "What's Inside?" sheet on the following page to discuss how all fruits and vegetables grow from seeds. Together, identify the pictures: an apple and apple seeds; pumpkin and pumpkin seeds; celery with seeds in the leaves at the top of the stalks; corn cob and its seeds, the kernels we eat; and the plum with its one big seed called a pit.

Guide children in comparing the seeds for size and shape. Which are big? Which are small? Which seeds can we eat? Which should we not eat? (any kind of pit). Point out that whatever their sizes or shapes, planting these seeds would grow more apples, pumpkins, celery, corn and plums.

Talk about how seeds grow in the ground. Explain that seeds need sunshine, air, water, and nutrients in the soil to grow into the foods we eat.

As a follow-up activity, provide an assortment of real fruits and vegetables to examine for their seeds. Categorize the fruits and vegetables by those with big seeds, little seeds, tiny seeds (smaller than small), and pits. Remove the seeds for children to look at close up. You can also use the three vegetables and two fruits on the card to reinforce the Five A Day recommendation.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> From Celebrate Healthy Eating™

# What's Inside?

## All fruits and vegetables grow from seeds

### Apples

grow from  
apple seeds.



What other fruits and vegetables have small seeds inside like apples?

### Celery

grows from  
celery seeds.



What other vegetables and fruits have tiny seeds like celery?

### Pumpkins

grow from  
pumpkin seeds.



What other vegetables and fruits have big seeds inside like pumpkins?

### Corn

grows from corn seeds—  
the kernels we eat!



What other vegetables have seeds we eat?

### Plums

grow from one  
giant seed called a pit.



What other fruits and vegetables have a pit?

NOTE TO TEACHER: Here are answers to support using the questions on the card. This is not a complete list but a place to start. Other fruits and vegetables with: small seeds inside like an apple (tomato, pepper, cucumber, pear); big seeds inside like a pumpkin (watermelon, orange, grapefruit, papaya, other types of squash); tiny seeds like celery (strawberry, blueberry, banana, kiwi, radish); seeds we eat (beans, peas); and a pit like a plum (peach, nectarine, mango, avocado).



# 5 A Day the Preschool Way



## All Kinds of Fruits and Vegetables!

Put up the colorful poster – All Kinds of Fruits and Vegetables! – at children's eye level and let your investigations into new and familiar fruits and vegetables begin. The poster can be found on the next page of this module. You can use the poster in multiple ways to reinforce the key message that eating a variety of fruits and vegetables is important for good health. And discovering fruits and vegetables of different sizes, shapes and colors is fun!

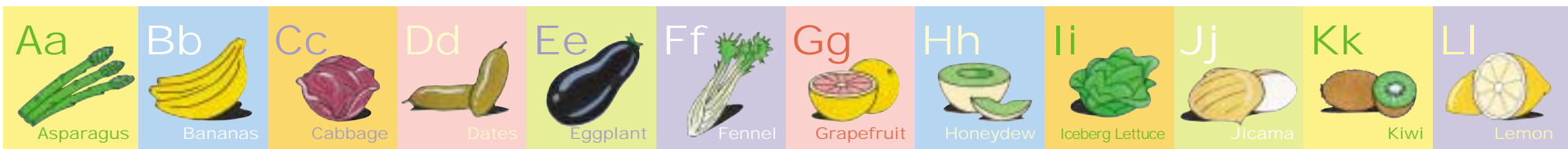
Talk about it:

- Display the poster for a few days to give children time to look at it on their own.
- Gather the group around the poster to talk about what they see. Make this a wide-ranging discussion, drawing on the children's own experiences and following their lead. Invite children to name the fruits and vegetables they recognize. Point to each fruit or vegetable as it's named and discuss its appearance. Encourage children to describe its features, such as crunchiness or sweet taste.
- Discuss how a fruit or a vegetable is served, such as in a salad. Talk about different ways that some fruits and vegetables are eaten, such as fresh, as juice, as sauce or in pies.
- Focus on fruits and vegetables that are new to children and identify them. For example, if papaya is unfamiliar, have one on hand. Cut it open to see the seeds inside. Offer small, bite-size pieces of papaya so that children who want to can try it. Repeat with other new fruits and vegetables.<sup>1</sup>

The poster is available as a pdf file at [www.celebratehealthyeating.org](http://www.celebratehealthyeating.org).

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<sup>1</sup> From Celebrate Healthy Eating™ series



# All Kinds of Fruits and Vegetables!



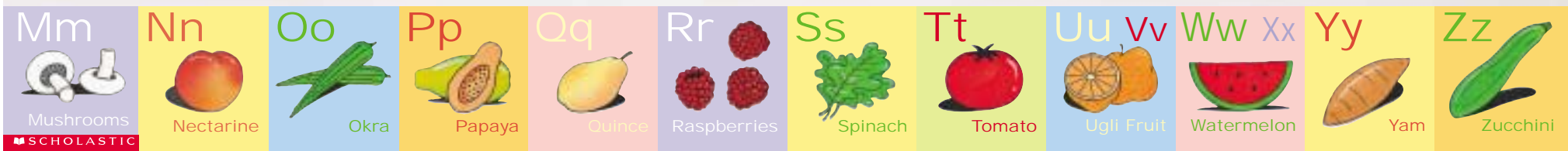
Some are big and just right for sharing.  
Some are little, so you can eat more than one.  
All kinds of fruits and vegetables help us grow!



## To the Teacher:

Provide children with picture cards or cutouts of fruits and vegetables. Have children sort fruits and vegetables by their real-life sizes, adding large fruits and vegetables to those on the big plate, medium-size fruits and vegetables to the middle plate, and small fruits and vegetables to the smallest plate.

photo by Ken Karp



# 5 A Day the Preschool Way



## Eating the Alphabet: Fruits and Vegetables from A to Z By Lois Ehlert

**This book is available for loan from the NET Library ([www.nutritionnc.com](http://www.nutritionnc.com))**

Teaching Tip: Have whole fruits and vegetables named in the book on hand for the children to see, touch and smell as you read about them.

Show the children the cover of the book. Let them know that Lois Ehlert both wrote and illustrated the book. Ask them questions like:

- What is the alphabet?
- What does eating the alphabet mean?
- What are the pictures on the front and back covers?

Show the children the letter of the alphabet on the page with the help of the children in the class; name the fruits and vegetables in the book.

Other questions to ask are:

- Who do you know that eats (name the fruit or vegetable)?
- Where do you get the (name the fruit or vegetable) you eat at your house?
- When do you eat (name the fruit or vegetable)?
- Is this (name the fruit or vegetable) big or little?
- What does (name the fruit or vegetable) taste like?
- Does anyone at your house cook (name the fruit or vegetable)?
- What is your favorite fruit? What is your favorite vegetable?

Pick one of these to do with the children in addition to reading the book.

**TASTING:** Show the children the fruits and vegetables that you brought in for the lesson. You can have extra ones to pass around for them to feel and explore. Cut up the fruits and vegetables that you have and let the children taste them. Make sure that the children wash their hands before they eat.

**LOOKING:** Show the children several varieties of apples such as red, golden delicious and green Granny Smiths. Let the children hold each type of apple to see what it is like. Ask the children what other foods are made from apples. Examples you could show are applesauce, apple pie, apple butter and baked apples.

**COLORING:** Let the children color one of the coloring sheets included in this module and take it home. They can put the sheet up on the refrigerator or on the table where they eat. It will serve as a reminder of at least one of the many fruits or vegetables they can eat each day.



# 5 A Day the Preschool Way



## Eating the Alphabet: Fruits and Vegetables from A to Z By Lois Ehlert

**MAKING PLACEMATS:** Use legal-size paper (8 ½ x 14) to make a placemat the children can take home. Let the children color one of the fruits or vegetables that they would like to eat on the placemat. Cover the drawing with clear plastic stretch wrap or contact paper to make a placemat for the child to use at home.\*

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\* Adapted from Texas Department of Health materials, 2003